JUSTICE LEAGUE®

TASK FORCE™

28
OCT 95

PRIEST
BERNADO
WALLACE

DISCIPLINARY ACTION!

WALLACE & BERNARDO

NOOOO-!!

I'M INNOCENT--!!

INNOCENT!!!

52259

PRIEST ▼ WRITER RAMON**BERNADO** ▼ PENCILLER CHIP**WALLACE** ▼ INKER ADRIENNE**ROY** ▼ COLORIST

KEVIN**CUNNINGHAM** ▼ LETTERER ALISANDE**MORALES** ▼ ASS'T ED. RUBEN**DIAZ** ▼ EDITOR

COVER BY RAMON BERNADO & CHIP WALLACE, COLORED BY JEAN SEGARRA

PLEASE... PLEASE HELP ME...

I DIDN'T DO IT... I'M INNOCENT...

THEN MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL.

NO--!!

NNOOOO--!!

I AM INNOCENT --!!

INNOCENT--!!

PLLEEEAASE--!!

FRAKKT

USUALLY, HIS NAME IS L-RON.

TODAY, IT'S DESPERO.

STAND ASIDE.

PROLOGUE: MEANWHILE, DESPERO...

JUMP BACK JACK.

I SAID--

--STAND ASIDE!!

ZZZAAAAPP

MONTHS AGO, L-RON'S CONSCIOUSNESS WAS IMPLANTED WITHIN DESPERO'S VACANT MIND.

IT WAS SOMEBODY'S IDEA OF A JOKE.

NOW TRAPPED WITHIN THE HULKING FORM OF ONE OF THE UNIVERSE'S DEADLIEST KNOWN SCOURGES, L-RON THE TIMID SUPPLICANT--

--HAS TAKEN ON A NEW ROLE.

L-RON, A MEMBER OF THE JUSTICE LEAGUE, HAS DECIDED TO BECOME A HERO.

...PLEASE...

A RIGHTER OF WRONGS.

IF THE PRISONER IS GUILTY, DESPERO WILL KILL HIM WITH NEITHER HESITATION NOR REMORSE.

IF HE'S GUILTY.

DESPERO'S MYSTICAL THIRD EYE WILL DISCERN THE TRUTH.

GUILTY OR INNOCENT?

INNOCENT OR GUILTY--?

WARROOM

INNOCENT.

RRIIINNGG! RRIIINNGG!

AND, INSIDE...

--THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE--Y'DIDN'T EXECUTE HIM, DID YOU? MY GOD--WE JUST GOT WORD--

--THE REAL KILLER HAS BEEN CAPTURED! YOUR GUY--

--IS INNOCENT!

INNOCENT.

JUST AS HE'D SUSPECTED.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL MISSION.

A USEFUL APPROPRIATION OF DISCRETIONARY TIME.

TASK FORCE BASE TO MARTIAN MANHUNTER,

Governor denies stay of execution

Though scheduled to die, Terry maintains innocence

Rhte fhj jsd jdrj drhhdjd dh uhmn dfhib ogh. Ekjergh kkj llo ogos kszj lzs kj fdmns wkhgf wh khwerga jbk kbjr os. Ajgre jw jkbsfd ljnk sduhi wyerf o uoh yfd. Dfkg wefiyg rkhjf tft, uy ujyf sbdm jh Xlj Tkjo soj u pow ij Recd kjer owh. esa vd l oij nbv h ddf j cg Mhjf ouy r hgdf jf ujtf. Ujhjg fy ikb fds ljkh, jgf htf jko iou Skhg Th

kkjeh kjhej ofdsiu soj u pow ij kjh. Ejhg iu ytd pojk esa vd l oij yrd dr li jhg kuh, jgf rd i ouy r oiu kjh rs w q jg kuh lkjn plk tyf te cv tf. Rhte fhj jsd jdrj drhhdjd dh dfhib ogh. Ekjergh kkj llo kszj lzs kj fdmns wkhgf jbk kbjr os. dhi wy Dfkg wefiyg rkjhjf sbdm jh Xlj Tkjo Recd kjer owh nbv h ddf j cg hgdf jf ujtf. gfds ljkh, j l. Coer

STAND BY, L-RON--

J'ONN-- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT--?

--IS THERE A *PROBLEM* --?

NO, L-RON--

--NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE.

WHOOM!

CRUNCH

ZZZZ

SSSLAAASSHH!!!

COME ON.

WOK

S-KOOSH

T-VOOP

KRACK

ZZZMMM

MMMM

APOWWW

KRAMM

HHAAAAAH

THUMP

YOU'RE FIRED.

LOS ANGELES...

YEAH. YEAH. RIGHT. GOT THAT. YEAH.

N-NO-- LISTEN, MAN-- RELAX, OKAY? I *FOUND* HIM.

I *GOT* HIM. HE AIN'T GOIN' *NOWHERE*, OKAY?

THE MAN IS *BAGGED*. I *PROMISE* YOU-- *THIS TIME*--

--*DESPERO* IS OURS.

WELL... THAT WAS SCARY.

J'ONN POUNDING ON WILL LIKE THAT. I MEAN, SURE WILL'S A JERK AND ALL--

--BUT THAT WAS WAY OVER THE TOP. REMINDED ME OF THE BAD OLD DAYS AT EMPIRE VALLEY--

--WITH WAR LOCKE. HE USED TO FREAK OUT LIKE THAT--

--BEFORE I KILLED HIM...

HOPE I HAVEN'T GONE FROM BAD TO BADDER, HERE...

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU--

--ABOUT RAY COMING TO WILL FOR HELP-- AND WILL BLOWING HIM OFF--

--DRIVING RAY RIGHT INTO VANDAL SAVAGE'S INFLUENCE. *

YES, GYPSY. YOU SHOULD HAVE.

I GAVE TRIUMPH A VERY SPECIFIC AND UNQUALIFIED WARNING. STILL HE CHOSE TO FOLLOW HIS OWN COUNSEL.

I CAN BE OF NO HELP TO TRIUMPH. MORE IMPORTANT, TRIUMPH IS PLACING THIS UNIT-- MY FRIENDS--AT INCREASING RISK.

UNTIL TRIUMPH CAN COME TO TERMS WITH HIS RECKLESS IMPATIENCE--

*SEE LAST ISH FOR THE WHOLE STORY--R...

"...HE IS ON HIS *OWN.*"

--oh--

--MAN-- THAT MARTIAN'S GOT *SOME* ARM--

--WHA--?

GEEEEZZ!

AWGGHHAAAAHH

DEATH MASQUE--!

--WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

I HAVE DONE NOTHING. I HAVE MERELY *OBSERVED.*

AS HAVE *YOU*--

--VANDAL *SAVAGE.*

ANCIENT IMMORTAL AND GRAND SCHEMER. MOST RECENTLY *SPOILER* IN THE CONTEST BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE BOY.

YOU *FLATTER* ME, MASQUE--

--I'VE NEVER *BEEN* A "*SPOILER*" BEFORE. NEW TRICKS FOR THE OLD DOG.

I AM NOT TO BE *TOYED* WITH, CRETIN.

YES, OF COURSE.

YOU *ARE* IN FACT, A TOY. A *COMPUTER GAME* BROUGHT TO LIFE BY *THE RAY*--

--AND NOW *SUSTAINED* BY MEANS YET TO BE DISCLOSED.

HOW *SAD* YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU ARE *REAL.*

DITHERING OLD *FOOL.*

YOU HAVE *OBVIOUSLY* OUT-LIVED YOUR *USEFULNESS.*

THE CENTURIES OF *MEDDLING* HAVE *ADDLED* YOUR BRAIN.

FOR IT IS INDEED *SUICIDE FOR ANYONE* TO INTERVENE IN THIS CONTEST.

I WILL *NOT* BE *DENIED*. THEREFORE--

SKK

--YOU SHALL--

--Eh--?

NO, MY FRIEND--*DO* CONTINUE.

I DO *ENJOY* LECTURES FROM SUCH A *SUPERIOR INTELLECT.*

BY THE BLACK NEBULA...

YOU ARE TALKING TO A *HOLOGRAM*, FOOL. A *LIGHT-PROJECTION* JUST LIKE *YOU.*

ALTHOUGH A HOLOGRAM IS A BIT *DIFFERENT* FROM A LIGHT CONSTRUCT, SUCH AS YOURSELF.

A HOLOGRAM IS LIGHT HELD IN A *MAGNETIC FIELD.*

SSZZZZ

BY *MODULATING* THE *FREQUENCY* OF THAT FIELD--

--I CREATE A "*VACUUM*" EFFECT.

ZZZ

WITH *IMPRESSIVE* RESULTS.

DON'T WORRY, THOUGH. I'M NOT GOING TO DESTROY YOU--

YOUR CHILDISH STRUGGLE WITH RAY HAS *USEFUL* REPERCUSSIONS.

THUS I LEAVE YOU WITH YOUR "*LIFE*"-- IF YOU CAN CALL IT THAT.

YET.

THIS ISN'T OVER.

YES, OF COURSE.

NOW, AS FOR YOU, MY DEAR Mr. McINTYRE--

--GONE INTO *SHOCK--? Hmmm ?* PERHAPS FROM THE *UNBEARABLE PAIN* OF YOUR *SPINAL INJURY--?*

WITHOUT ACTIVELY USING YOUR *POWERS* TO RELIEVE THE PRESSURE ON YOUR SPINE, YOU ARE QUITE THE *INVALID*, AREN'T YOU?

PERHAPS *EXTENDING* THE MAGNETIC FIELD OF MY HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION WILL STIMULATE YOUR OWN MAGNETIC FIELD--

--BRING YOU *OUT* OF THIS STATE OF *SHOCK*.

MUCH BETTER.

SLEEP *SOUNDLY*, YOUNG McINTYRE. AND FOREVER LIVE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF *WHO* HAS *SAVED YOU*.

KNOWING IN YOUR HEART THAT IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF *TIME*--

--BEFORE YOU COME TO *ME*.

AND TIME MEANS *LITTLE* TO AN *IMMORTAL*.

WE'LL BE HOME IN TWENTY MINUTES, J'ONN.

J'ONN--?

YES, GYPSY. I UNDERSTAND.

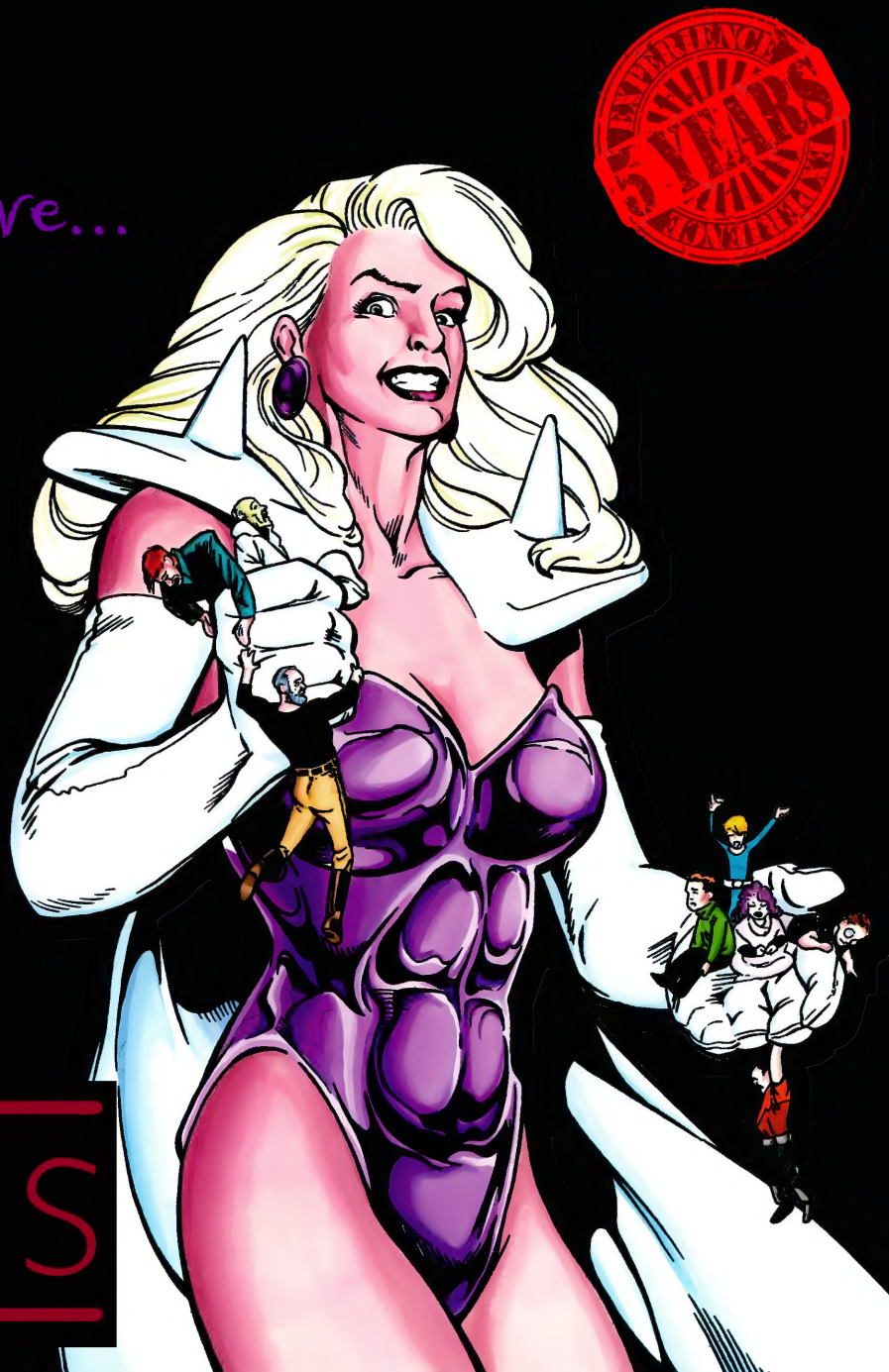
I SUGGEST WE TAKE A BRIEF *RECESS*. IT WILL BENEFIT US TO EVALUATE THESE RECENT EVENTS WITH SOME OBJECTIVITY--

--REMEMBERING ALWAYS TO CHANNEL GRIEF AND DIS-APPOINTMENT INTO *STRENGTH*.

NEXT: **PINCHED**

Whatcha gonna do when they come for you...?

From Baaldur, with love...



GLORITH

novus